

Treasury Department,

BUREAU OF THE MINT,

Washington, D. C., May 9, 1890., 189

The Superintendent, U.S. Mint,
Philadelphia, Pa.

Sir:

Referring to the bill of the Orr and Hess Machine Co., voucher No. 506, of your ordinary expense account for the month of April 1890, for "repairs to draw benches" amounting to \$1,120.05, I find that \$923.40 of this bill is for per diem work done outside of the mint, viz: "115 $\frac{1}{2}$ days work, boring, turning, planing, slotting and gear-cutting at \$6.00 - \$693.00" and "51 $\frac{1}{2}$ days work drilling and fitting at \$4.50 - \$230.40. I will thank you to inform the bureau what evidence you have in your possession that the number of days work specified in this bill were actually performed in the repairs to the draw benches, and whether the price charged per day is reasonable and such as is usually paid mechanics in your city.

You will also inform the bureau whether proposals for repairing these draw benches were invited, or what sort of a contract, if any, was made for this work.

Section 7 of article 26 of the regulations provides: "all supplies not obtained by requisition upon the Director of the Mint, shall be purchased by the Superintendent or upon his order or re-

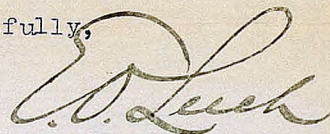
quest, and all articles procured or delivered at any mint shall be accompanied by bills or memoranda stating the quantity and price; and before payment all accounts for supplies shall be examined and certified by him".

I will thank you to inform me what examination you made to ascertain the number of days labor actually performed in repairing these draw benches.

It seems to me that the proper way to secure the best and cheapest work for the Government, which it is our duty and should be our purpose to obtain, is to have competent firms examine the machines to be repaired, and the nature of the repairs indicated, and enter into a contract with the lowest responsible party for the proper performance of the work at an agreed price.

Hereafter when extensive repairs to machinery or apparatus are contemplated you will pursue this method.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "D. Lusk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping "L" and "S".

Director of the Mint.

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Washington, D.C.
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Very respectfully,
E.O. Leech
Director of the Mint.